

The Family Forge

Reference and Administrative details

A Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Report and Annual Accounts For the period 1st Nov.2022-Oct 31st 2023

Charity Registration 1161900

www.familyforge.org

Registered Address

4 Cobbs Brow Lane
Newburgh
Lancashire
WN8 7ND
07947 853502

Life Skills Centre

128 Sandy Lane
Skelmersdale
WN8 8LH

Trustees

Jocelyn Owens
Michael Turner
Enisa Huso

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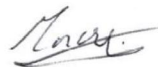
The trustees have referred to guidance from the Charities SORP FRSE (effective 1st Jan 2015) while the statement of the accounts is cash- based receipts and payments accounts verified by an Independent Examiner.

Signed on behalf of all the trustees,



Jocelyn Owens

Michael Turner



Enisa Huso

Date: 23/01/2024

The Family Forge
Trustees Report
For the period 1st November 2022 – 31st October 2023

Charity Structure/ Governance and Management

The Family Forge became a registered charity in May 2015. It is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and continues to follow the directions of its constitution amended on 25th March 2015. During the period Nov 2022 to the end of Oct 2023, the charity was led by 3 trustees one of whom is also the Life Skills Centre manager- Jocelyn Owens. This manager works on a full-time voluntary basis. She was supported this year by 1 skilled paid tutor, 5 voluntary support workers and one volunteer admin support worker drawn from our beneficiary group. Beneficiaries were able to inform the decision making through informal discussions in the past year.

During the year Enisa Huso was appointed the third trustee following the resignation of Ester Sanchez at the end of the previous year. The trustees are appointed for three years or until retirement by a properly convened meeting of the charity trustees. The maximum number of trustees is three. Decisions are made by a 75% majority of the trustees.

Knowledge of our trustee opening was advertised but finally we approached Enisa from our beneficiary group as someone who was interested, talented, provided a different perspective and had the time to commit to the responsibilities. Training was provided through the provision of the Trustee Duties Information Pack and an induction to admin oversight was undertaken through working together, one morning a week for several weeks, with the Centre Manager. Enisa's safeguarding training was undertaken through the updating of the charity's policy documents and the preparation of materials for use to train all the staff and volunteers.

No exemptions from disclosure apply and no trustee held title to a property belonging to the charity during the period as the charity currently holds no property.

The pay of the language tutors/activity leaders is set with regard to the going rate for private hourly tutors as our activity leaders are self-employed and not employed by the charity. The government suitability test for self-employed status was carried out in 2021.

Special thanks should be given to Prudence, Judy, Melanie, Andy, Eileen and Oitu and everyone who spared their time and effort to assist in the work this year on a voluntary basis along with special thanks to our donors who made the work possible.

This year the charity had the opportunity to become a distribution partner with SELNET- who were working to reduce digital exclusion. This chimed with our objective to advance the relief of those in need and suffering disadvantage so we took up the opportunity.

Philip Atherton is the Independent Examiner of our accounts- no fees are incurred: Contact details: 22 Beacon House, 1 Willow Walk, **Skelmersdale**, Lancashire, WN8 6UR Telephone 01695227320

Financial review

Funding this year was received from Ormskirk Rotary Clock Tower fund (small grants scheme), the Yapp Charitable Trust and the Healthy Neighbourhoods Fund (via the NHS). Other funds came from private donors with monies from St Johns C of E parish Council, Burscough being carried over from the previous year.

Private donations this year formed approximately 12% of The Family Forge income; for which, once again we are extremely grateful. Thank you to all our donors.

No reserves are kept at present.

Funds remained tight during the entire year and were exacerbated by the late payment of a grant due to registration difficulties on the relevant NHS system causing a trustee to assist with a temporary small loan to assist cash flow- no interest was charged and this was paid back as soon as the grant funding came in.

Public Benefit Statement

The trustees took into account that any purpose to be considered charitable must be beneficial with any consequent harms not outweighing the benefits and further acknowledge that these benefits must be identifiable.

Once again to reduce any possible harm the swimming activity was undertaken at a local pool during public swim times ensuring there was always a life guard present beside the charity instructor and a second volunteer leader thus allowing the considerable benefit of providing the opportunity of learning to swim to adult non swimmers.

The trustees also recognised that to be charitable any personal benefit must be incidental. No trustee benefitted personally from the activities of the charity except through travel expenses as a result of voluntary working and a small number of online courses were purchased from North West management Solutions Ltd, the business of a spouse of a trustee to the amount of £72.

As mentioned, the Trustee /Manager had her travel expenses met by the charity to the amount of £1586.94 this year. The expense rate paid is 0.45p/mile

Enisa Huso was engaged as a photographer for the Refugee Week exhibition prior to becoming our new trustee.

The trustees were also aware that charitable activities must also benefit the public in general or a sufficient portion of the public with the exception of personal poverty. With this in mind the charity assisted in the supply of 84 tablets to its beneficiaries. But the Life Skills Centre was open to all although attenders are largely from the asylum and refugee community. The poverty of this group is backed up by the fact they only receive Section 95 support from the government.

Objectives and Activities

The Family forge was formed to:

- advance education in the specific area of personal and family development,
- to advance the Christian faith by raising awareness and understanding of Christian beliefs and practices
- and to advance the relief of those in need by reason of youth, age, ill health, disability, finance and other disadvantage

September 2022 saw the Family Forge reopen its doors and continue its' **Richer Lives Project** in Skelmersdale with refugees, asylum seekers and local migrant women. Once again operating between the hours of 10am -4pm Monday to Friday with the funding provided by St Johns C of E parish in Burscough and then from March by the NHS healthy Neighbourhood Fund. We once again offered our seven-point program.

We provided (1)support work (i.e. we provided a place to go to and access to problem solvers/mentors), (2)language classes with the opportunity for certification aswell as other certification opportunities such as Food Hygiene courses(3) voluntary work opportunities(4) a cultural program, (5)physical activity via adult learn to swim classes and hikes,(6) driving theory and supervised driving opportunities and (7) a health improvement program through doctor and dentist registration and appointment support.

The run up to **Christmas 2022 and Spring 2023** saw some intensive work with a few beneficiaries as well as the usual drop in and integration loan applications, home finder applications, emails to the local MP, bank account applications, driving license, travel document and universal credit applications, CV compilation, foreign travel arrangements, HC2 certificate updating, optician, doctor and dentist registrations, appointments, reimbursements for travel to hospital appointments applications, the provision of actual travel to hospital appointments, even the sourcing of funds for the dentist for one person, ARC card issuing and applications for work permitted ARCs, counselling re accommodation issues and assisting with the finding of accommodation, 3 home visits with either asylum or refugee families, driving theory and ESOL classes. We even sorted out a bad debt situation where someone got themselves into difficulty with a mobile phone contract.

Intensive work included:

- weeks of driving accompaniment with five refugees (1): a Syrian refugee housewife with a large family and her (2) husband, (3) a Jordanian (4) a Sudanese and (5) and an Ethiopian refugee. All passed their tests.
- a few weeks (of one morning a week) devoted to explaining and coaching through a food safety Level three certificate with an Angolan asylum seeker with language difficulties and later in the year a Ukranian and Namibian lady on Level two Food Safety.
- continued support through the process of becoming a licensed hackney Carriage driver for one other refugee. He did secure a licence.
- the registering and coaching of an Ethiopian refugee to gain entry to the Open University on a BSc course in Computing and Electronics, along with the researching for scholarships and student loan appropriateness.

-two people were taught to read from scratch with another two having learnt the phonetic alphabet.

-time was also devoted to negotiating a family matter that had to go through the Family Court system and accompanying him to the relevant hearing.

-additionally, time was devoted to a family reunion process to bring the wife of an asylum seeker over from a war-torn country. This same person was helped into employment.

-time was devoted to the support of a fresh claim for a failed asylum seeker in order to keep a father united with his son. This was successful.

-several Life in the UK classes and even religious topics were discussed to interested individuals and topical issues such as homosexuality.

-as well as the usual activities a Christian leaflet was produced concerning the breakdown in human relations that occurred in the Genesis account of the creation.

Early notable events and activities

- two beneficiaries attended the trustee meeting in February.

-one beneficiary attended a family conference in June with a trustee.

- November 14th saw the Family Forge introduced to the local Sponsor Families for Ukrainians.

- and a volunteer tree planting opportunity in Dolphinholme was undertaken

- December saw an opportunity for litter picking at Knott End Beach.

- January saw an opportunity to reupholster chairs another beneficiary

- and an opportunity for an Iranian gentleman to make a presentation in English (not his first language) to present the work of the Family Forge to a funder.

Trips

11th to 15th March saw a residential trip to Chatton near Wooler in Northumberland. This was part funded by a volunteer who provided the accommodation, the Clock Tower Rotary Club, St John's C of E Parish and the Yapp Charitable Trust. The aim of this trip was both health ie physical & mental wellbeing as-well as educational and cultural. The beneficiaries hiked, relaxed, shared the cooking, learnt and visited places of significance in English history and UK life such as Hadrian's Wall, Edinburgh- the home of the Scottish Parliament and Iona- a stronghold of Anglo Saxon Christianity, Bamburgh castle and Berwick on Tweed -Lowry's holiday town and Castle Rigg in Cumbria.

-a trip to Chirk and Llangollen to visit a Norman castle and the Llangollen Aqueduct was undertaken in October

Volunteer opportunities for women included:

-Coniston Hall Manchester in March to assist in preparing the food in this hall of residents for students.

-Thornycroft Hall in Cheshire 25th April for a food preparation and cookery session.

Fundraising Concert

April provided a further voluntary opportunity for the chefs and volunteers amongst the beneficiaries to provide the meal for a fundraising concert at Westhead village hall organised by one of our English volunteers.

May and beyond

May saw us become a distribution partner of Selnet. At the same time Afghan and Ukrainian refugees were beginning to settle in and around Skelmersdale. This was an opportunity to provide tablets to those in financial need or digitally excluded or suffering with their mental health.

Since we had often been asked for lap-tops we took this opportunity and assisted in the provision of over 80 tablets to our old and new beneficiaries. Individual applications had to be made. Basic training had to be given which we combined with obligatory completion of a repeated 4 session program about the first 1500 years of British history and early Britain- following the British Council Life in the UK for citizenship material and our own videos- ending with the Magna Carta – the beginnings of the legal system, parliament and the beginnings of the United Kingdom and the Christian heritage.

This activity was intensive and concentrated in May/June/ July /September and October and then beyond our financial year end.

Swimming sessions were offered for a period of about 10 weeks from May-July and a bike maintenance project run on a Wednesday afternoon by a volunteer. 5 bikes were sourced and provided with locks and puncture repair kits during this time.

June saw us participate in a **Refugee week** exhibition making use Enisa's photography skills before she became a trustee (migrant)- showcasing refugees working in the local community thus boosting their self-confidence and pride in making positive contributions to the UK. This was funded by the local County Council Refugee Week Fund.

An occasional food voucher or purchase to relieve a practical need was made.

After the summer break in September and October the office was only open three days a week due to the need to spend our scarce funds wisely and the terminal illness of the manager's mother and these family responsibilities impinging on the time available by the centre manager, nevertheless a busy timetable was operated.

Achievements and Performance

A total of 148 people were served this year through the centre -40 women and 108 men- 25 Sudanese, 19 Iranians, 17 Ukrainians, 11 Syrians, 11 Eritreans, 10 Afghans and 7 Ethiopians forming the largest groups by nationality while the number of nationalities served increased to 30 as the centre attracted local migrant women.

Nationalities beyond those mentioned included Portuguese, Romanian, Ghanaian, Kuwaiti, Albanian, Moldovan, Namibian, Polish, Equadorian, Sri Lankan, Latvian, Cuban, Saudi, Somali, Sierra Leone, Iraqi, Cameroonian, Mali, Jordanian, Nigerian and Palestinian. We did not record the nationalities of 15 people. 14 friends of beneficiaries, also attended the centre this year.

Of the 148, 84 were seeking asylum, 48 were refugees and 16 were migrants. Of the asylum seekers often their status changes as we serve them to become refugees. Our status recording occurs when we register the individual.

The age profile was baby-69 of which the main groups was aged between 20 and 30 and 30 and 40 but there was also a sizable group aged over 40. The married form the largest cohort although often the men 's wives are still in the country of origin.

Beneficiaries by age:		Marital Status	
minors	3	Single	51
20s	50	Married	67
30s	45	Other status	10
40s	25	Don't Know	19
50s	8		
60s	5		
don't know	12		

Achievements Continued

In addition to the individual successes mentioned before, 84 individuals received tablets and Life in the UK training. This combatted social isolation and mental wellbeing issues, improved digital inclusion and promoted personal development. Integration was also improved due to the compulsory class attendance and the knowledge gained.

Our support work was ongoing with individuals throughout the year and continues to be the backbone of our work.

- 5 driving theory test passes were achieved (known about) and also 5 practical driving test passes after accompaniment with a volunteer
- two others ie a Ukrainian lady and a Moldovan man were assisted to gain confidence driving in the UK. And one Albanian lady was given the confidence to begin learning.
- many others began driving theory instruction or were inspired to self-learn via apps on their phones. This often happens and we don't hear of the successes in these cases.

This year saw an increase in Ukrainians attend the centre and the continued increase in the local migrant women who are still seeking language classes and social and cultural interaction.

The swimming program saw 6 ladies attend. There were approximately 25 participants on the swim program between the men and the women's classes; about 7 men learnt to swim from

scratch or gained the instruction they needed to progress- not all attended every session but as they wished.

The efficiency of the health program continues to improve, administered by Melanie whose sole job is to ensure our beneficiaries are registered with a doctor and where needed a dentist and advice is given as to the best way to make appointments indeed doing it for them often. Her record of action taken in this regard demonstrates that our beneficiaries' health needs are dealt with in a timely manner and difficulties with funding are overcome. All our beneficiaries know that we are there for them, this fact ensures a more positive state of mental health in the group.

In all many people were assisted with their individual problems and many small successes were achieved.

Of note

The office was however broken into this year through the skylight in the ladies' bathroom which left roof and electrical damage. Nothing was stolen which points to the break-in being perpetrated by youths.

Plans for the future

In the coming year we intend to continue our new Richer Lives Seven-point Project. As regards the ESOL provision we will seek innovative ways to maintain the interest of students as not all flourish with academic style class-based learning and we will seek to engage our beneficiaries in brainstorming issues.

We will continue our search to find a solution to the homeless problem for refugees also of those desiring to remain in Skelmersdale.



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name
The Family Forge

On accounts for the year ended

31 October 2023

Charity no
(if any) 1161900

Set out on pages

1-2

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/10/2023 DD / MM / YYYY.

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

~~[The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of [insert name of applicable listed body]]. Delete [] if not applicable.~~

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed: Philip Andrew Atherton

Date: 8 / 4 / 2024

Name: Philip Andrew Atherton

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body

Chartered Accountant ICAEW

(if any):	
Address:	22 Beacon House, 1 Willow Walk, Skelmersdale, Lancashire, WN8 6UR

Section B	Disclosure
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Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

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CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

The FamilyForge

No (if any)

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

01/11/2022

To

31/10/2023

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Grants	-	12,490	-	12,490	24,230
Donations	1,836	-	-	1,836	4,996
Amazon Smile	5	-	-	5	10
GAYL	19	-	-	19	24
Gift Aid	135	-	-	135	-
Other	-	105	-	105	35
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	1,994	12,595	-	14,589	29,295
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	600
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	600
Total receipts	1,994	12,595	-	14,589	29,895
A3 Payments					
Staff and Training	-	3,220	-	3,220	20,218
Lease Rates Insurance	-	4,363	-	4,363	4,344
Gas Electricity Water	-	1,642	-	1,642	1,385
Computer AVG Broadband	-	701	-	701	939
Office Repairs and Decorations	-	580	-	580	238
Office equipment including computers	-	97	-	97	35
Educational materials Tests	-	1,572	-	1,572	1,064
Educational Trips	-	1,026	-	1,026	1,160
Personal Need grants to individuals	-	194	-	194	541
Volunteer travel and pick up service	-	894	-	894	331
Outdoor classroom including lunches	-	193	-	193	353
Swimming and physical activities	-	142	-	142	330
Consumables ink stationary etc	79	9	-	88	196
Marketing and other	615	232	-	848	106
Supervised driving	-	-	-	-	514
Sub total	695	14,865	-	15,569	31,754
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	695	14,865	-	15,569	31,754
Net of receipts/(payments)	1,300	- 2,270	-	- 970	- 1,859
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	3,162	2,841	-	6,003	7,862
Cash funds this year end	4,462	571	-	5,033	6,003

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	4,462	571	-

(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))

	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
<i>Joseph Owens</i>	JOCELYN OWENS	11/4/24
<i>Michael Turner</i>	MICHAEL TURNER	13/4/24